

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

PAUL BERESWILL,

Plaintiff,

- against -

DEF PEN MEDIA, LLC.,

Defendant.

Docket No. 1:18-cv-4631

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

**COMPLAINT**

Plaintiff Paul Bereswill (“Bereswill” or “Plaintiff”) by and through his undersigned counsel, as and for his Complaint against Defendant Def Pen Media, LLC., (“Def Pen” or “Defendant”) hereby alleges as follows:

**NATURE OF THE ACTION**

1. This is an action for copyright infringement under Section 501 of the Copyright Act. This action arises out of Defendant’s unauthorized reproduction and public display of a copyrighted photograph of Kristaps Porzingis, owned and registered by Bereswill, a New York based professional photographer. Accordingly, Bereswill seeks monetary relief under the Copyright Act of the United States, as amended, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*

**JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

2. This claim arises under the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. § 101 *et seq.*, and this Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1338(a).

3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant because Defendant resides in and/or transacts business in New York.

4. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b).

**PARTIES**

5. Bereswill is a professional photographer in the business of licensing his photographs to online and print media for a fee having a usual place of business at 622 South Main Street, Freeport, NY 11520.

6. Upon information and belief, Def Pen is a foreign business corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York, with a place of business at 557 Kosciusko Street, Apt. 1D, Brooklyn NY, 11221. Upon information and belief Def Pen is registered with the New York Department of State Division of Corporations to do business in the State of New York. At all times material, hereto, Def Pen has owned and operated a website at the URL: <https://defpen.com> (the “Website”).

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

**A. Background and Plaintiff's Ownership of the Photograph**

7. Bereswill photographed Kristaps Porzingis (the “Photograph”). A true and correct copy of the Photograph is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

8. Bereswill then licensed the Photograph to the New York Post. On February 6, 2018 the New York Post ran an article that featured the Photograph titled *Kristaps Porzingis out for season with torn ACL*. See URL <https://nypost.com/2018/02/06/kristaps-porzingis-out-for-season-with-torn-acl/>. Bereswill’s name was featured in a gutter credit identifying him as the photographer of the Photograph. A true and correct copy of the article is attached hereto as Exhibit B.

9. Bereswill is the author of the Photograph and has at all times been the sole owner of all right, title and interest in and to the Photograph, including the copyright thereto.

10. The Photograph was registered with the United States Copyright Office and was given registration number VA 2-098-260 and titled “Bereswill, Kristaps Porzingis, 2\_6\_2018.jpg.” See Exhibit C.

**B. Defendant’s Infringing Activities**

11. On or about February 6, 2018, Def Pen ran an article on the Website titled Knicks *All-Star Kristaps Porzingis Diagnosed with Torn ACL*. See URL <https://defpen.com/kristaps-porzingis-torn-acl/>. The article prominently featured the Photograph. A true and correct copy of the article is attached hereto as Exhibit D.

12. Def Pen did not license the Photograph from Plaintiff for its article, nor did Def Pen have Plaintiff’s permission or consent to publish the Photograph on its Website.

**CLAIM FOR RELIEF**  
**(COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT AGAINST DEFENDANT)**  
**(17 U.S.C. §§ 106, 501)**

13. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1-12 above.

14. Def Pen infringed Plaintiff’s copyright in the Photograph by reproducing and publicly displaying the Photograph on the Website. Def Pen is not, and has never been, licensed or otherwise authorized to reproduce, publically display, distribute and/or use the Photograph.

15. The acts of Defendant complained of herein constitute infringement of Plaintiff’s copyright and exclusive rights under copyright in violation of Sections 106 and 501 of the Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. §§ 106 and 501.

16. Upon information and belief, the foregoing acts of infringement by Defendant have been willful, intentional, and purposeful, in disregard of and indifference to Plaintiff’s rights.

17. As a direct and proximate cause of the infringement by the Defendant of Plaintiff's copyright and exclusive rights under copyright, Plaintiff is entitled to damages and Defendant's profits pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(b) for the infringement.

18. Alternatively, Plaintiff is entitled to statutory damages up to \$150,000 per work infringed for Defendant's willful infringement of the Photograph, pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504(c).

19. Plaintiff further is entitled to his attorney's fees and full costs pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505.

**PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests judgment as follows:

1. That Defendant Def Pen be adjudged to have infringed upon Plaintiff's copyrights in the Photograph in violation of 17 U.S.C §§ 106 and 501;
2. That Plaintiff be awarded either: a) Plaintiff's actual damages and Defendant's profits, gains or advantages of any kind attributable to Defendant's infringement of Plaintiff's Photograph; or b) alternatively, statutory damages of up to \$150,000 per copyrighted work infringed pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 504;
3. That Defendant be required to account for all profits, income, receipts, or other benefits derived by Defendant as a result of its unlawful conduct;
4. That Plaintiff be awarded his costs, expenses and attorneys' fees pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 505;
5. That Plaintiff be awarded pre-judgment interest; and
6. Such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

**DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL**

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable in accordance with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 38(b).

Dated: Valley Stream, New York  
August 16, 2018

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